/333 cont./

Chapter II

Agriculture

241 The Chiriguano, like the Guarani and the Chané, their ancestors, are excellent farmers, and the working of the soil represents their principal occupation and their great concern.
243 For them corn is of prime importance; it constitutes the basis
[273] of their diet, for it enters into the preparation of most of their dishes and in addition gives them their preferred drink, chicha or kāwi.

[132] The sandy lands of the western Chaco and its climate,
• [134] hot and dry a great part of the year, but also rainy during the summer months, seem to be particularly suitable for this grain. I have never seen such beautiful fields of corn anywhere. The ears are large, well filled out /334/ with kernels, and extremely tasty. The Bolivian half-breeds and settlers who are coming in greater and greater numbers to take the place of the Indians devote themselves like them to the growing of corn, which, with cattle-raising, is their main resource.

114 My trip to the Chaco, which took place from the month
243 of February to the month of June, did not give me a chance to
[101] be present at the sowing which is done at the beginning of the rainy season. For many details I shall therefore be forced to
[129] refer to Corrado (pp. 42 and 48), Campana (pp. 96-98), Nordenskiöld (2, pp. 181-184, and 10, pp. 23-34), to Nino (pp. 237-241), and Rosen (1, p. 205).

241 When a Chiriguano wishes to cultivate a new piece of
243 ground for himself and his family, he scours the environs of his village looking for a spot which may suit him and which is, in addition, easily irrigable. This condition is generally fulfilled by the lands at the foot of a hill or rising ground. The rain water which pours down there assures them of fertility.

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131 Thus formerly the Chiriguano territory in the north was contiguous with the province of Sara, in the south and southwest with Argentina and the city of Tarija, in the west with Tarabuco country, and in the east with the colony of Caranda'iti. According to its former boundaries, it then included an area of 200 leagues from north to south and southwest, and more than 90 leagues west to east.

131 16 [648] Today this extensive territory has been much reduced because of emigration, caused in part by the whites, under whose dominion most of them will not resign themselves to staying; the plagues which decimate the race have a powerful influence on its further reduction, and very soon /5/ barely the 131 name will remain. Today to the north it scarcely reaches Abapó, to the south, Iiyuru de Yacuiba, to the west, Monteagudo, and to the east, Caranda'iti, some hundred leagues from north to south and about 40 from west to east.

131 [648] [433] Formerly it embraced several degrees of latitude and three and a half of longitude: as they lost a considerable part of this area, so will they end up by losing it all, for despite their being heirs to the country which God had given them, as one of them was saying to me not long ago, they do not know how to farm it and improve their agriculture; they prefer to go far away and work for others rather than to own land at home. This very day only a few leagues remain in the hands of the Indians, Caipipendi in the province of Cordillera, Gutierrez Canton, and all the territory occupied by the missions, but both are likely to pass into foreign hands, because in fact the Indian is incapable of making the land that he does possess bear fruit; then the few survivors in the territory will be servants in their own house, as are so many others in lands that were once their own.

3/ 134 [152] The land is very unstable, at least that now occupied; it lacks stone and gravel, and since in their season the rains are torrential, they easily open cracks which in a few years become wide, deep ravines. Contributing a great deal to this are the cattle, which, because of their weight, stir up the land with their hoofs more than other livestock; for this reason

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134 in certain valleys that are narrow or not too wide there is scarcely room for fields. because so many little ravines have been formed. Such is the valley of Huacaya Canton: if there lived in it today the multitude of Indians which formerly were there. it would be hard to find. because of the woods and the ravines. sufficient land in the tiny level places for all the fields of maize. French beans. and gourds which they value much for food and gifts: only for other elements would a little valley be very desirable. were it not all owned.

Hills or Mountains

133 Chiriguano territory. because it is very extensive. as has already been seen. is quite varied: from Tarija to Monteagudo and from Tarija to the salt flats of O'Connor Province in the city of Entre Ríos it is very mountainous and few are the places which extend far enough to form a level place of a few leagues. Although there are /6/ no very high hills. between the two hills which limit the valleys there is an infinity of low hills of all sizes in height. width. and length.

The pampas begin imperceptibly from Monteagudo in the west and from Aguairenta. where the Gran Chaco begins: said pampas from Monteagudo little by little grow larger or again become small as the ridges permit. until they reach the last cordillera. which is found to the east of the Mission of San Buenaventura de Yvo. at a distance of one league. behind which begin the immense plains of the Gran Chaco. where the horizon becomes low.

The principal mountains are: Padilla. called through antonomasia "The Hill." because its configuration is the same one that is called "Curi" toward San Juan del Piraí (1).

1. The hill is different from the Curi. because the former is more an enormous rock which ends in the ranges of Limon.

At this point the road across the hill is very rough and long. but if it is rather long toward Padilla. it is. by contrast. as